To: MassDOT Board
From: Astrid Glynn, Rail and Transit Administrator
Re: Current Activities
Date: April 20, 2018

Transit:

- BusPlus Reallocation: MassDOT has completed the competitive process by which 3 BusPlus intercity buses were to be reallocated to new carriers. On April 11 two successful bidders were awarded 5-year leases of over the road coaches owned by MassDOT. Peter Pan Bus Lines will receive two buses, while Limoliner LLC will receive one.
    - Peter Pan will be using the buses as part of their fleet State of Good Repair program and will provide service in Massachusetts. Additionally Peter Pan will agree to report all eligible miles to the National Transportation Database, which is expected to result in substantial additional FTA 5307 funding for the Commonwealth.
    - Limoliner will use the bus to start a new commuter service between Framingham and Boston. The route will service commuters working in the Boston CBD as well as in the Framingham Tech Park. Additionally, Limoliner will also report this route's miles to the National Transportation Database, which is expected to result in additional FTA 5307 funding for the Commonwealth.

- FRTA Maintenance and & Operations Facility: On April 5 the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) announced that MassDOT was awarded $6m to help theFranklin Regional Transit Authority (FRTA) replace its maintenance facility. The existing maintenance facility was built in 1911 . Of 139 projects in 52 states and territories, MassDOT/FRTA was awarded the largest amount in the nation through this competitive process that FTA held under the Buses and Bus Facilities Infrastructure Investment Program. While one of the largest grants made, it falls short of the budget that FRTA had intended, so MassDOT and FTA Region 1 will be working closely with FRTA to match the scope to the available funding

- Intern Projects: MassDOT's Transit interns are currently working on two long-term projects. One consists of research into nationwide DOT policies and practices related to Volunteer Driver Programs. The other consists is converting General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS) data into GIS data to analyze RTA

transit networks and levels of service. MassDOT's two current interns have made valuable contributions to the transit program. MassDOT Rail & Transit has interviewed summer intern candidates and is currently making job offers to qualified candidates.

- Compliance and Oversight: An FTA contractor will be conducting a mandated Drug and Alcohol audit of rural grantees the week beginning May 21st. The audits will be conducted by two teams of two FTA reviewers. All three Regional Transit Authorities that receive rural Federal funds (sec. 5311) from MassDOT will be visited.

- MassDOT Community Transit Grant Program State Fiscal Year 2019 Application and Training: The MassDOT Transit Unit announced the training and application schedule for the MassDOT Community Transit Grant Program for FY 2019. The Community Transit Grant Program is the consolidated competitive grant program for Federal Transit Administration Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities funds and State Mobility Assistance Program funds.

  Eligible applicants for the Community Transit Grant Program include private non-profit organizations; city, county, town, and tribal Governments; and Regional Transit Authorities. Eligible uses of Federal Section 5310 funds include the purchase of capital equipment (such as fully-accessible vehicles and dispatch software), mobility management activities, and operations for transportation services that address the mobility needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities. State Mobility Assistance Program funds may be used for the purchase of vehicles only. A list of awards from prior years can be found on the Community Transit Grant Program page on the Mass.gov website.

  The FY2019 Community Transit Grant Program application period is scheduled to open on Monday, May 14th, 2018 and close at 5:00pm on Monday, June 11th, 2018. Applications re to be submitted in the MassDOT Transit Unit's online grants management system, GrantsPlus+.

  Prior to the application period, MassDOT will host a number of application training sessions across the state. Training sessions will cover program eligibility and requirements, the online application process, application content, and tips for completing a successful application. Attendance at one of these training sessions

is mandatory for all new applicants, but previous CTGP awardees are also welcome and encouraged to attend. The training schedule is:

- New Bedford – April 30
- Worcester – May 1
- Springfield – May 2
- Lawrence – May 3

Rail:

- Berkshire Flyer: An outside section of the FY18 budget instructed MassDOT to form a Working Group to examine the concept of a Berkshire Flyer that would link Pittsfield and New York and be patterned after the seasonal weekend service provided that the MBTA now offers as the Cape Flyer. The Working Group concluded its work and on March 31 it submitted a report to MassDOT and to the chairs of the legislative committees on Transportation, Ways and Means, and Tourism, Arts, and Cultural Development. The report described a possible seasonal weekend service between New York City and Pittsfield and outlined next steps for local supporters to undertake if they wish to pursue the concept

- Construction: Consistent with the CIP, members of MassDOT's Rail Unit (a) is continuing to purchase track material for the Framingham line that will be used for the Foxboro Pilot, (b) is replacing track ties on the Middleboro Secondary to improve the State of Good Repair and to facilitate the future Phase 1 of South Coast Rail , and (c) has scheduled a bid opening for the construction of a high platform (Platform C) at Springfield Union Station.

- Springfield Intercity Rail Passenger Services: MassDOT and CT DOT are reaching substantial agreement on terms by which MassDOT will support CT's initiative for increased passenger rail service between New Haven and Springfield and by which MassDOT could initiative a pilot service between Springfield and Greenfield. Both services will give residents of the Pioneer Valley access to Connecticut's job markets, as well as more frequent and convenient connections to New York City. The service from New Haven to Springfield will start this Spring. A starting date for the Greenfield pilot has not yet been established.